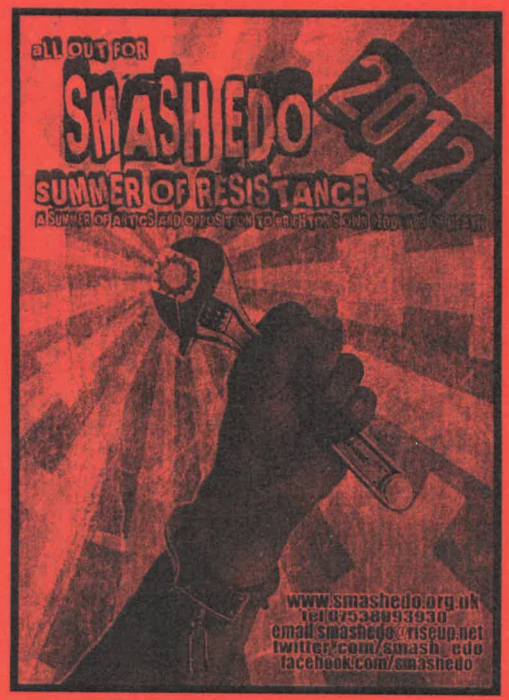

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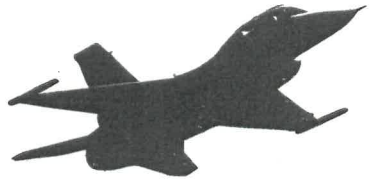
A Smash EDO Publication

SUMMER OF RESISTANCE

A brief introduction to EDO/ITT complicity in conflict, coups and war crimes - and why we should act.



SUMMER OF RESISTANCE

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INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet examines the current wars being fought and contemplated by the UK, US and Israel, takes stock of the state of the UK's antimilitarist movement and argues that now, more than ever, it is necessary to build a radical antimiltarist movement.

War continues to ravage societies in the Middle East and Africa, and there is an increasing likelihood that the United States will embark on a catastrophic strike on Iran which could ignite the whole region. In fact, the attack has already started with the ratcheting up of sanctions against the republic. And whilst the Iranian regime is undoubtedly oppressive, the welfare of the Iranian people is not what motivates the US, UK and Israel.

The consequences of a war are both unknown and beyond comprehension, but there are at least two guaranteed outcomes: mass casualties that could surpass even the huge death toll in Iraq; and the use of airstrikes aided by components manufactured by EDO MBM (now a part of ITT Exelys).

Smash EDO's campaign to shut down Brighton's local weapons manufacture began as bombs rained down from the Baghdad sky in 2004. Of all the munitions used in the initial bombardment, the Paveway system of missiles, developed by Raytheon with the help of EDO, surpassed all others. Since then, anti-militarist activists have used a combination of tacticts, including roof-top occupations, lock-on's and blockades, to target EDO MBM.

The futility of marching from A to B was encapsulated by the Stop the War protest in London, when not even the presence of over 2 million people united against an invasion of Iraq could stop Tony Blair from joining forces with George Bush to topple Saddam. Now, as we enter a new phase of Western Imperialism the anti-war movement needs to again find it's radical voice. Not only are we in the twelfth year of US and UK occupation of Afghanistan but the US is fighting proxy wars in Somalia and Pakistan and Israel continues to act with impunity against Palestinians living in Gaza and the West Bank.

What follows is an historical exposition of EDOs role in many conflicts and coups that have taken place since the beginning of the Second World War. This ranges from helping install despotic regimes in South America, to the Israeli bombardment of Gaza in 2008/09. The pamphlet then turns to past actions against EDO in the hope that readers will be inspired to carry out their own acts of civil disobedience and help us shut the factory down.

FROM NAZI FOCKE WULFS TO ISRAELI F16S: THE ONLY PRINCIPLE IS PROFIT

From the beginning, International Telephone & Telegraph (ITT) was possibly the pioneer of the multinational company with loyalty only to its own profit margin. Whether in Nazi Germany, Chile, China or wherever. Least of all to its "home country".

ITT was formed in the US in 1920 as a telephone company but soon diversified into arms manufacturing and purchased a plethora of global companies, from catering to car hire and media to insurance.The founder brothers had bought into telephone companies in Puerto Rico and Cuba. ITT started in Europe in 1923 when Primo de Riviera's military dictatorship handed over the Spanish telephone system. Then ITT moved on Belgium, the UK and Germany.

One of the first US businessmen Hitler received after taking power in 1933 was ITT's boss. In 1939 ITT became the first foreign company to be declared "German" by the Nazi government, and thus exempt from seizure by the "Custodian of Alien Property".

Through a subsidiary, ITT owned 25% of Focke-Wulf, the German aircraft manufacturer, builder of some of the most successful Luftwaffe fighter aircraft. In addition, an ITT owned company made parts for equipment for the Nazi Army- the Wehrmacht. Obscenely, in the 1960s, ITT Corporation won $27 million in compensation for damage inflicted on its share of the Focke-Wulf plant by Allied bombing during World War II.

In Hungary ITT collaborated with the pro-Nazi Horthy government from 1938 and continued throughout World War 2. The Communist takeover booted them out. In 1973 the same regime compensated them with several million dollars in an attempt to gain Western investment.

ITT bought into the television market at the beginning of the 1950s, then spread into telephone and radio. In 1959, new CEO Harold Geneen began a massive expansion which cultimated in an attempt to buy ABC Television network for $700million in 1963. It was possibly the only deal ever halted by federal antitrust regulators.

So, in the 1960s, ITT bought over 300 companies, from Sheraton Hotels to semiconductors, cosmetics and for-profit schools! In the late 1960s ITT bought America's biggest insurance company, Hartford. It proved extremely profitable for ITT.

The Justice Department woke up briefly and tried to break its mergers with Canteen, Grinnell and Hartford, but at the 11th hour mysteriously relented and settled the case on ITT's original terms. This miraculous U-turn dovetailed neatly with the Republican Party fortuitously finding $400 000 of funding for its annual conference in San Diego from ITT subsidiary Sheraton Hotels. Nine days after the Sheraton offer was confirmed in writing the settlement of the ITT anti-trust suit was announced.

From a high point of $550 million in 1970, ITT's growth slowed as higher interest rates started eating away at profits in the late 1960s. Come 1977, ITT shovelled profits from successful businesses into an ambitious new Digital Telephone Exchange, which reportedly cost US$1 billion. The project was a disasterous failure. When Rand Araskog was promoted to CEO in 1979 he dismantled much of ITT, selling the majority of its holdings. By 1992 the company had completely ended its involvement in the telephone industry.

The latest restructuring of the company came in 2011, when ITT seperated it's three core groups into seperate entities, with 'defense' becoming ITT Exelis. Higher return assets, including areospace and train components, were consolidated into ITT, and ITT Xylem took over water management.

Outside the US, manufacturing subsidiaries in the UK Australia, Germany, Belgium, and France manufactured equipment according to ITT designs mostly for sale to their respective national telephone administrations. This equipment was also produced under license in Stalinist Poland, Tito's Yugoslavia, and elsewhere.

MEDDLING IN SOUTH AMERICA

In 1959 Cuban revolutionaries took over the ITT-owned national telephone company. ITT swore never to allow it to happen again.

When João Goulart and his reformist coalition was elected in Brazil in 1964 - launching major land reforms and infrastructure nationalisation - American business united to "persuade" US President Lyndon Johnson that Goulart's goverment were "agents of the Soviet Union". ITT owned Brazil's phone company and feared nationalisation. In 1964 a US-sponsored coup put the military into power. The bloody dictatorship lasted until 1985.

In Chile, ITT owned 70% of Chitelco (the Chilean Telephone Company) which was worth $150 million, as well as right wing newspaper, El Mercurio. The Socialist candidate, Salvador Allende, promised - you guessed it - land reform and infrastructure nationalisation. The company donated $700, 000 toward the 1970 election campaign of Allende's' opponent, Jorge Allessandri.

When Allende won, ITT put up a further million dollars to undermine him. No suprise then that ITT led the 'Ad-Hoc committee on Chile', based in Washington, which brought together Anaconda Copper and other mining companies, alongside Purina, Bank of America and Pfizer Chemical. They combined to force Allende away from natonalisation by "confronting him with economic collapse".

Senate hearings in 1973 found that ITT had, for example, advised Kissinger to suspend all aid funds to Chile and the company had taken the liberty of preparing an eighteen point plan for the Nixon administration suggesting the US foment a military coup. CIA documents declassified in 2000 suggest that ITT also financially helped the preparation.

The military coup duly took place in Santiago on 11th September 1973, resulting in the arrest of 40-50,000 people. At least 3,000 people were executed or 'disappeared' under Pinochet's military junta, and the first nation Mapuche lost their communal lands - describing the result as "genocide-by-starvation". On September 28, 1973, alongside assorted demonstrations across the world, bombs were set off at ITT offices in New York, Berlin, Nuremberg, and Zurich and a fire started in ITT Standard's offices in Rome.

ITT's meddling in Latin American politics did not stop at Chile and Brazil. In 1976, after a right wing military junta seized power from Argentinian president Isabel Peron, Martinez de Hoz, an ITT board member, was appointed Minister of the Economy and set about opening up the economy to foreign multinationals and banning strikes.

Despite the breaking up of the conglomerate, with the sale of ITT's telegraphic and non-manufacturing interests in the 1990s, ITT has retained its ability

to influence both foreign and homeland policies. From 2007-10 the company spent approximately $3.5 million on lobbying.

ITT's current CEO, Denise Ramos, is on the executive committee of the Aerospace Industrial Association (AIA), a major defence lobbying organisation, which, in 2010, won $59 billion of supplemental US military funding, in spite of major government funding cuts elsewhere. Ramos is also a member of The Business Roundtable, "President Obama's closest ally in the business community", and the board of the Congressional Medal of Honor Foundation, which includes the heads of Boeing, Lockheed Martin, Raytheon and General Dynamics. It vigourously promotes a "patriotic" pro-war agenda.

At the same time ITT was covertly transfering "classified information" to US super power opponent- the Peoples Republic of China! But in spite of their best efforts, in public relations, covering their tracks and stalling, in 2007, ITT Corporation became the first major defense contractor to be convicted for criminal violations of the US Arms Export Control Act.

The US$100 million fines resulted explicitly from ITT's outsourcing program, in which they transferred night vision goggles and classified information about countermeasures against laser weapons, including light interference filters, to engineers in Singapore, China, and the UK.

ITT COME TO BRIGHTON

The EDO factory in Brighton came into existence as MB Metals in 1946, a British company which later became MBM Technology. In 2003 MBM was bought by EDO Corporation, a US arms multinational.

In 2004, in the wake of the British bombing of Iraq, activists began a campaign to close down EDO. Hundreds of demonstrations and acts of direct action have been held outside the factory. In 2005 EDO tried to prevent protest at its Brighton plant. The corporation failed and ended up with over one million pounds of court costs, and a nose dive in its market value.

An agreement was reached on September 18, 2007 for ITT to buy EDO Corporation for $1.7 billion. After EDO shareholders' approval, the deal was closed and finalized on December 20, 2007.The purchase was a boon for ITT as it gave them access to EDO-owned patents for the Zero Retention Arming Units (ZRAU) and Field Replaceable Connector System (FRCS), used on F-16 fighter jets. It also gave the company access to lucrative MoD contracts.

WHAT THREAT? IRAN, THE US AND ISRAEL

There are two things that should be known about a war with Iran. Firstly, an attack on Iran would be insane. Secondly, it has already started.

Ever since Iran's 1979 Islamic Revolution set the new republic on a course of independence from the West, US foreign policy towards the Islamic Republic has remained more or less unchanged. Through a combination of economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation and open warfare, the US and its allies have done all they can to crush the country and overthrow its government. The first, and so far the worst, attempt was the Iran-Iraq war, started with the support of the United States, by an opportunistic Saddam Hussein 1980. The US provided diplomatic cover for the war at the United Nations, as well as giving secret intelligence to the Iraqi war effort. The Iran-Iraq War left over one million people dead, mostly on the Iranian side [1]. Stopping the wave of populist religious revolutionary activity that threatened to overthrow the USA's puppet states in the region was considered worth the price.

According to most western media outlets Iran is run by mad Mullahs who must be stopped before they develop a nuclear bomb [2]. In reality, Iran has not attacked another country in hundreds of years. The Iranian nuclear 'threat' has been talked up since the 1990s. Current Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netenyahu said, when first PM in 1992, that Iran was three to five years away from developing a nuclear weapon. Twenty years later he is still claiming exactly the same thing. Sometimes he makes no sense at all, such as during his infamous March 2012 "nuclear duck" speech to AIPAC in Washington, "If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then what is it? That's right, it's a duck – but this duck is a nuclear duck."[3]

For the record, there is no evidence that Iran is currently developing nuclear weapons [4] Iran is a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and, under this treaty, is legally allowed to develop civilian nuclear power. Years of UN inspections have found nothing to the contrary. By contrast, Israel, India, and Pakistan have all developed nuclear weapons. None of these countries have faced serious international pressure to join the NPT and disarm. The US meanwhile, has an estimated arsenal of thousands of nuclear warheads, perhaps half of the nuclear weapons in existence.

Although Iran does not have an active nuclear weapons programme, it does pose something of a threat to both the West. The country's ultra-conservative

Shia government is above all else, nationalist, and is not interested in serving the needs of American leaders, unlike, for example, the monarchs of the Gulf States. But Iran has the world's largest reserves of oil after Saudi Arabia, as well as some of the largest reserves of natural gas in the world. China receives the lion's share of that oil, and if America can control China's fuel supply, then China can be forced into accepting the US world order.

Yet it is not America but Israel that is the most belligerent towards Iran. With US help the Israelis have been upgrading their long range offensive capability in order to be able to strike Iran. Bunker busting high explosive bombs, together with long range modifications for Israeli F-16s, theoretically enable the Israeli air-force to attack Iranian nuclear and military targets.

Recently however the US has scaled back at least some of its cooperation with the Israelis, after it was revealed that Israeli Mossad spies had posed as CIA agents in order carry out joint terror operations with Iran-based the Sunni extremist organisation, Jundallah (Soldiers of God). The recent attacks on Iranian military facilities are believed to be joint Jundallah-Mossad operations [5]. Jundallah is widely suspected of being linked (at least ideologically) to Al Qaeda. The US is also accused of co-opting Jundallah into its anti-Iranian axis.

From an Israeli military-strategic position, Iran is their only real rival in the Middle East. Iran possesses an industrial economy, a strong technical skills base, a modern weapons programme, and even a space programme. As an anti-imperialist, Islamic government, support for the Palestinians and Lebanese Shia communities is an ideological imperative.

But above geopolitical worries, Israel's right-wing leaders want an Iran War to distract from their domestic problems and their illegal occupation of Palestine. Israeli official politics now consists of far right groups competing to be the most extreme. Israel can't go to war without America, but Israel has powerful allies in the neo-conservative and Christian / Jewish religious fundamentalist lobbies in the United States.

Serious strategists doubt Israel is capable of successfully attacking Iran. Israeli warplanes could reach Iran (assuming that they can pass over Turkish, Syrian and/or Iraqi airspace), but there is no guarantee they would return. And they could do little more than symbolic damage to the the Iranian nuclear programme- which is widely dispersed around Eastern Iran, in facilities dug deep inside mountains.

Aware of this, Israeli thinking is that if they start a war with Iran, the United States would have to support them. But were Israel to attack Iran, it is probable the latter would withdraw from the NPT and put all their efforts into developing a bomb.

The Iran War, the scripted but never shot finale of the War on Terror trilogy, is already here. Military facilities have been repeatedly attacked, causing scores of casualties. Nuclear scientists have are repeatedly targeted for assassination [6]. Israel's intelligence minister, Dan Meridor, explained helpfully, "There are countries who impose economic sanctions and there are countries who act in other ways in dealing with the Iranian nuclear threat." "Politics by other ways" is how famous military strategist Otto Clauswitz defined war.

Were Israel and/or America to attack Iran, the consequences would be devastating. Almost undoubtedly the highest price would be paid by Iranian civilians, who would be the target of a "shock and awe" style terror attacks from the air. Neither Israel nor the United States makes much of the distinction between civilian and military. Israel in particular flagrantly violates international law during its attacks on Gaza. This was at its most extreme during Operation Cast Lead of '08-'09, the stated goal of which was to destroy the "terrorist infrastructure" of Gaza- a euphemism for attacks on government and United Nations facilities, including schools and hospitals.

The possibility of a wider regional conflict should not be overlooked. A war could suck in Lebanon (which suffered over a thousand deaths at the hands of the IDF in 2006), and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. Iraq, whose government is on very friendly terms with Iran, could also become a proxy battleground, a move which could return Iraq to the sectarian bloodshed it saw during the most violent phase of the Iraq War [7].

The United States has militarily encircled Iran. US forces operate from neighbouring Turkey, they control massive spy facilities from their "embassy" in Iraq (insurgency and popular revolt forced the US to close down Iraq's 'permanent bases' in the country). To Iran's east, Afghanistan is home to over 700 US military bases, over 100,000 troops, and is a staging point for regular overflights into Iranian airspace [8].

US CENTCOM (Central Command) has its forward HQ in Qatar, just across the coast from Iran. Bahrain (also on the Persian Gulf) is home to the US 5th Fleet- with at least one (but often more) carrier battle-group based there. Carrier battle groups are the main unit of US naval power. A single carrier group, based around a nuclear powered aircraft carrier, contains more firepower than most industrial nations [9]. The Eastern Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz host to this massive US naval presence [10].

The United States holds regular military manoeuvres off the Iranian coast. The objective of so much military power is to threaten and intimidate Iran into kowtowing to US interests. International law is very clear on the use of force. The threat of force to achieve a political advantage is just as illegal as the actual use of force under international law.

Although the United States and Israel out-gun Iran in virtually every field, an attack on Iran would deal a tremendous blow to the world economy. Iran is well placed to attack the Straights of Hormuz through which some 40% of the worlds seaborne oil passes (and 20% of all oil traded), effectively crippling the oil export capabilities of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and the Gulf States. Even if Iran's entire navy were sunk, low tech rockets (such as the Katyushas used so effectively by Hezbollah during the 2006 war [11]) could rain down from Iranian territory in sufficient numbers to either stop all shipping, or make shipping costs (in military escorts and maritime insurance) so high as to dissuade nearly all civilian vessels.

The only way this could be stopped would be a land invasion and occupation of southern Iran. Iran is twice the size of Iraq, with three times its population. Its military strength has been rebuilt after the Iran-Iraq War, and its government retains wide popular support. The US would lose such a war, but the bulk of the human cost of such a colossal crime would be paid by the millions of Iranians forced to suffer the hell of another war on their own soil.

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COLLATERAL DAMAGE: EDO IN AFGHANISTAN

On 22 January 2009 ITT Corp announced its Brighton subsidiary EDO MBM had secured a lucrative contract supplying Field Replaceable Connector System (FRCS) weapon umbilical cables to the US Air Force (USAF) for F-15E Strike Eagle fighter jets. The umbilical is a flexible cable that connects 'smart' weapons to aircraft electronic systems, invented and patented by EDO MBM Director John Eaton in 2002. They were to be manufactured at ITT's Integrated Structures facility in Brighton for delivery within a month.

In May 2009, after these cables had been supplied, USAF F-15E jets were involved in one of the Afghanistan war's most deadly airstrikes; a massacre of up to 140 people –across the villages of Gerani, Gangabad and Koujaha – in two hours of bombing. Local officials said those killed were all civilians [1]. The sheer violence and unaccounability of airstrikes is reflected in the fact that, despite the presence of civilians, the bombardment was a sustained attack which then US Defence Secretary Robert Gates initally decline to even acknowledge.

On 4 September 2009 USAF F-15s killed 30 Afghani civilians in another airstrike near Kunduz. The bombings had been ordered by German Colonel Georg Klein, following the hijack of two fuel tankers by the Taliban. Whilst in transit one of the tankers became stuck and was eventually opened up for those nearby to siphon off the fuel. Locals had began to descend on the tanker, taking advantage of the free fuel in times of understandable harship - the F-15E fighters sent bombs into the tankers, turning them into fireballs.

Klein asserted he thought the tankers were to be used to attack German forces – despite the fact people were collecting fuel from them – and NATO claims there was no way of the General knowing civilians had entered the area. Yet it begs the question of why the tankers were bombed in the first place; and without the umbilical's manufactured by EDO MBM, those weapons would have stayed on the plane.

Dutch F-16 aircraft have used the FRCS since 2005. In October 2009 it was reported that a Dutch F-16 had launched a guided weapon that killed nine civilians in the Nad Ali district of Helmand province. Six of those murdered by the bomb were children [2]. The airstrike had reportedly been called in by British troops, who had come under fire and provided the coordinates for the hit.

The FRCS has also formed part of the USAF A-10 Thunderbolt, also known as the Warthog, since 2008. Warthog's have been described as the 'work horse' of the aerial assault in Afghanistan, and, along with the F-15E Strike Eagles, are used in close air support (CAS) missions. These rapid response missions are an integral part of the NATO-US occupation's strategy in Afghanistan, and work in tandem with troops on the ground engaged in battle.

The use of rapid response air-strikes – unplanned aerial assaults called in when occupation troops come under fire – has long been the weapon of choice for NATO and US forces in Afghanistan. They have also been the source of untold civilian casualties. Since the American-led invasion in 2001 an estimated 12,500 to 14,700 civilians have been killed [3]. According to the Afghan Independent Human Right Commission, almost 700 civilians were killed by airstrikes in 2008 [4].

It is these kind of statistics that forced a rethink of US and NATO strategy in the latter stages of 2009 following the installation of General Stanley McChrystal as top commander in Afghanistan. As he put it: "Air power contains the seeds of our own destruction. A guy with a long-barrel rifle runs into a compound, and we drop a 500-pound bomb on it?" [5] You can see his point. In June and July 2008 alone, 597,000 pounds of munitions were dropped from the sky, more than the whole of 2006 [6].

However, due to a candid interview with Rolling Stone magazine back in early 2010, in which he criticised the Obama Administration's strategy on Afghanistan, McChrystal was forced to stand down after only a year in the job. He was replaced with General David Petreaus - who led Bush's surge in Iraq - and the lethality of airstrikes, whilst not reaching previous levels, have risen. Unsurprisingly, F-15E jets have been involved in more civilian casualties. This includes a February 2011 NATO airstrike that reportedly killed at least 35 people, a large majority of which were women and children. The attack, which also deployed helicopters, took place in the eastern Afghan province of Kunar [7].

Despite the mass-media's lack of critique, the Afghanistan war was never really about Osama Bin Laden or national security, but an exercise in military might designed to send a signal to countries in the Middle East that America still rules the world. After all, it is no longer a hidden fact that: a) the Taliban were willing to extridite Bin Laden so long as the US could produce evidence against him; and b) the more hawkish elements of the Bush Administration wanted to pin 9/11 on Sadam Hussein and invade Iraq instead.

As American troops prepare to withdraw from combat roles by the end of 2012, Barak Obama is beginning a covert proxy war carried out from the sky by unmanned drones armed to the hilt with Hellfire missiles. In a two-fingered salute to the idiots who awared him the Nobel Peace Prize, Obama is pioneering the drone-led extrajudicial [read assassination] style of warfare.

In fact, the US has tacitly supported similar Israeli policies against Palestinian's in the Gaza Strip. Someone is deemed to be any enemy and within hours they can be wiped off the face of the earth without even a murmor from those whose job it is to record such actions in print. Only now, Obama is literally clogging the sky above Afghanistan and even more so in the tribal belt of Pakistan. The humming of drones is the soundtrack to life in North West Frontier Province.

Do not be fooled into thinking that these assassinations are clinical. When a target is hit many more die with them. To give one example, when a CIA drone slammed two hellfire missiles into the home of Baitullah Mehsud, leader of the Taliban in Pakistan, they also murdered, along with Mehsud, eleven others: including his wife, mother-in-law and father-in-law. The whole operation was executed at the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virgina, the missiles launched remotely as the drone relayed everything via video feed.

The anti-militarist movement needs to adapt to this new phase of warfare, whilst continuing to attack the structures of the old. After the huge toll on troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan, ground invasions may not be so attractive in the near future. Yet, much in the same way the US continued to bomb countries in Southeast Asian after withdrawing from Vietnam, areal bombardments will undoubtedly continue. EDO/ITT is one cog in the airstike machine, as are countless other factories across the UK. They can, and must, be stopped.

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ANTI MILITARISM IN AN AGE OF AUSTERITY

In the last three years the coalition government's austerity measures have begun to affect every aspect of ordinary people's lives in the UK. Cuts to housing benefit and local council services, pension cuts, the criminalisation of squatting and the marketisation of social housing have left many people literally fighting for their livelihood and a roof over their head. However, we are not 'all in this together'; ruling elites and the private companies that they run are profiting from lucrative government contracts provided by privatisation, workfare schemes and the increased need for security services that these unpopular policies require. The banking sector, that got us into this mess in the first place, has been bailed out with billions. Our future is being mortgaged to protect the livelihoods of the ruling elite.

In 2009 public anger at the government's response to the financial 'crisis' was met by violent repression at the G20 in London. Ian Tomlinson, a bystander, was killed after a blow from a police baton, while walking home. Since then the UK has seen the largest outpourings of public rage since the anti-poll tax campaign: from the occupation of Conservative HQ in protest at the rise in student fees in 2010 to the attacks on banks during the March 2011 mass demonstration against austerity and the Summer 2011 riots across the UK. Public anger against being asked to foot the bill for the 'crisis' is likely to continue, and so too will the state's violent counteraction.

In this current climate, as we are experiencing a full frontal attack on our livelihoods, why should we worry about the state's foreign wars?

The 'defence' sector, the arms companies, the security service providers, the manufacturers of surveillance and database technology, provide the equipment for the state to control the local population and to subjugate foreign populations. Any struggle against the state's policies at home is made stronger through its ability to resist state imperialism abroad and the alliances it builds with progressive resistance movements in the countries the state seeks to dominate.

Furthermore, the arms industry and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) are being propped up by taxpayers money which the government is saying can't be expended on services like the NHS. Lastly, the British state's constant wars provide a valuable testing ground for military technologies which will soon be rolled out against the state's opponents at home.

This short piece will briefly explore these issues and put the case that it is of paramount importance that we continue to resist against militarism, of which EDO/ITT is one small component, in conjunction with our struggle against the current state attack on all of us.

Despite telling the rest of us that we must tighten our belts and implementing swingeing cuts to, and privatisation of, essential public services' the government still sees fit to involve the UK in more and more wars. 'Defence' has seen much fewer cuts than most departments. Despite the cuts the Ministry of Defence (MoD) paid £24.7 billion to its suppliers in 2009-10. Over the past five years, as the financial 'crisis' unfolded, the MoD spent £18 billion on the military campaign in Helmand alone [1], while the conflict in Iraq, according to the UK government, cost the UK taxpayer £9.24 billion [2].

The state has historically propped up the arms trade, which was largely state owned prior to the Thatcher era, to ensure that its armed forces are equipped to fulfil its need to fight constant foreign wars and, if need be, subdue the indigenous population. These days the British armed forces are increasingly equipped by US arms companies but the dedication to subsidising the British arms industry continues. This subsidy is at the expense of the taxpayer. In spite of the fact that only 0.2% of jobs in the UK are in the arms exports and arms make up only 1.5% of total exports a massive 27% of government research expenditure goes on arms and 54% of UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) staff are engaged in helping to sell arms [3].

The battlegrounds of the 'wars on terror' provide incubators for repressive technology which can then be used against the government's domestic opponents and to impose control on the domestic population. For example, drone technology (ie unmanned aircraft) pioneered by Israel during its occupation of Egypt in the 1960s and Lebanon in the 1980s [4] has been used in extra-judicial targeted assassinations by the US in Pakistan, Yemen, Afghanistan and Somalia and by the UK in Afghanistan. Drone warfare is, by its nature, indiscriminate; inflicting huge civilian casualties on one side without exposing the aggressor to risk of injury.

Civilian drones have already been used by Russian police to control anti-G8 protesters and by Chevron to protect their Angolan oilfields. Now ten UK universities are receiving funding to develop civilian drones in a BAE Systems led programme. One application for these drones will be to consolidate the borders of 'fortress Europe'.

After the Summer 2011 riots David Cameron advocated the introduction of water cannons laced with coloured dye, to make it easier to apprehend fleeing demonstrators. This technology, again, was pioneered by the Israeli occupying army in putting down the Palestinian popular resistance against the apartheid wall. In short, new military technology being developed in the UK, US and Israel and battle tested in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Somalia may soon be used against us by the police and the Home Office.

The UK anti-militarist movement hit an all time high, in terms of boots on the streets, in 2002-3. However, the majority of the resistance to the Iraq war consisted of an A-B marching exercise which did not effectively challenge the state's drive to war. Since then autonomous anti-militarist groups, with direct action as their central tenet, have begun to forge a new, stronger more militant movement in the UK. This movement reached a peak in 2008/9. Since then the energy of that movement has wained a little due to the climate of fear induced by police repression, the end of US bombing in Iraq and the need to pour energy into anti-austerity movements.

Despite this, anti arms trade campaigns are planning new mobilisations, such as Smash EDO's Summer of Resistance, Faslane's Summer Days of Action and the Stop the Arms Fair Coalition's campaign against the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI) biannual arms fair in Docklands, London. Groups are coming together to forge new coalitions against drone technology and the new threat of war with Iran. It is essential that, as well as resisting government policy at home, we continue to build this movement into a force which can truly oppose the UK's ongoing militarist policies.

REFERENCES

[1] http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/industry/defence/8668085/Britain-spent-18-billion-on-war-in-Afghanistan-figures-show.html

[2] http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11107739

[3] http://www.caat.org.uk/issues/introduction/govt-support.php

[4] http://www.negedneshek.org/exports/uavs/israel-and-the-rise-of-drone-warfare/

SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

The Summer of Resistance is an open platform for you to come and do exactly whatever you want at EDO - knowing that your efforts will form part of the wider resistance. Actions can be as fluffy or as spiky as you like. Since the campaign has been going for so long, a lot of different events have taken place at the factory and beyond - from peace choirs to the EDO decommissioning. The list below is not exhaustive, but put together with the aim of giving you a flavour of past actions.

Rooftop Occupations - Several rooftop occupations have taken place at the EDO factory. Activists have scaled the building and unfurled banners from the rooftops, highlighting EDO's complicity in war crimes. Rooftop occupations also took place at the EDO location in Fishersgate. That factory is no longer a part of EDO/ITT.

Blockades - Over the years there have been numerous blockades of the EDO factory, carried out in a variety of ways. Some tactics have included: blocking the road going up to the factory through human chains or harris fencing lock-ons, people locking on or super-glueing to the parameter fence, people scaling the fence and locking themselves to the entrance doors and people locking themselves to fencing and concrete barrels in-front of the gates.

Readings of the Names of the Dead - The names of the people murdered with the help of EDO components during attack on Gaza, Afghanistan and Iraq have been read out through a megaphone outside the factory on many occasions. Testimonies from victims of war have also been read out.

Critical Mass Rides - Critical mass bike rides up to the factory both raise awareness of the factory through town and work as a different kind of noise demo once you're there!

Weapons Inspection - People dressed in protective white suits and demanded a weapon inspection of the EDO premises.

Decommissioning - During Israel's operation Cast Lead in Gaza, the 'decommissioners' broke in to the EDO/ITT factory and smashed it up to the best of their abilities. Their aim was to stop the production line which was aiding these massacres. In 2010 they were all acquitted by a Brighton jury after a three week trail, where they had heard all the evidence against EDO.

Die-Ins -Die-ins, where people lay down on the ground, often in blood stained clothing to imitate the victims of war, can work well as a temporary Blockade.

Pixie Actions - Through the years there have been many incidents reported on the internet of 'pixie' actions, or anonymous actions taking place at night. These have included paint bombing of the factory, the smashing of windows and CCTV cameras, the sabotage of the factory air conditioning systems and more.

Surprise Noise Demos -Noise demos outside the factory take place every Wednesday between four and six, but sometimes it can be fun to turn up at unexpected times.

Street Theatre - If you are artistic you might want to take a bit of street theatre to the gates of EDO. In the past there have been performances of the history of ITT as well as improvisation pieces with dozens of demonstrators starring as previous EDO security guru Mark Lynch (with varying degrees of success...)

Car Park Invasions - Car park invasions have involved anonymous protestors running past the gates to knock on windows, make noise and flyer cars.

Themed Noise Demos - Noise demos are often better if they are themed and noisy. A theme to a demo can also make it easier to highlight a particular issue, such as war and migration, drones, or Palestine. An original theme can be a good way of involving people who might not otherwise have thought of coming. Some of the more memorable noise demos have been on a theme, such as the yearly Halloween demos or a demo featuring rather grim karaoke.

Lock-Ons of Delivery Vehicles - There have been lock-ons on delivery vehicles heading up to EDO. This can be an effective way of essentially blockading the factory whilst putting pressure on delivering companies working with ITT.

ACTIONS AWAY FROM THE FACTORY

Target Barclays (and/or Other ITT Investors) - Barclays are the market maker on the stock exchange for EDO's parent company ITT Exelis. They are also the bank with the most investments in the arms trade generally. During the last few years there has been a campaign called Target Barclays which aims to stop Barclays from providing this service for ITT Exelis. There have been demos and actions across the country during this time.

We would like to intensify actions against Barclays for the Summer Of Resistance. As Barclays are also the bank with the most significant investments in Israel, other Palestine solidarity groups are beginning to act on this. Actions against Barclays can take place anywhere across the country, before and during the summer. If you carry out a demo or an action where you are, do let us know!

The Smash EDO May Day demo in 2009 focused on investors in ITT.

Phone Blockades - Why not call EDO/ITT or tweet @ITTExelis with any questions you might have about their business? Their phone number is 01273 810500.

Delivery Companies - There have been sporadic actions against delivery companies which provide services to EDO. One of the main delivery companies we believe to be working with EDO DHL.

NOTES ON LEGAL SUPPORT

If you are thinking of doing a potentially arrestable action such as a blockade, you might want to get in touch with the campaign beforehand and we can talk you through the potential outcome. Through the history of the campaign, we have had well over one hundred arrests, and only a handful of action related convictions.

Often the court cases which have resulted from of direct action taken at the factory have been invaluable as a way of gaining information about the company, and getting a chance to grill the managing director under cross examination. However, ANY action is important so don't feel like you can only come if you are ok with being arrested!

If you want a guide to the legal issues activists face, take a look at the Free Beagles web-site http://www.freebeagles.org/ (although some of it is a bit out of date).

We have very good solicitors - Kellys - who are aware of all the issues involving EDO and whom we have been working with since the beginning of the campaign; so in the event that you are charged with an offence there will be plenty of support for you. We will also provide arrest support for anyone on the day.

Kellys can be contacted on 01273 674 898

AFFINITY GROUPS: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

An affinity group is a small group of 5 to 20 people who work together autonomously on direct action or other projects. You can form an affinity group with your friends, people from your community, workplace, or organisation.

Affinity groups challenge top-down decision-making and organising, and empower those involved to take creative direct action. Affinity groups allow people to "be" the action they want to see by giving complete freedom and decision-making power to the affinity group. Affinity groups by nature are decentralized and non-hierarchical, two important principles of anarchist organizing and action.

The affinity group model was first used by anarchists in Spain in the late 19th and early 20th century, and was re-introduced to radical direct action by anti-nuclear activists during the 1970s, who used decentralised non-violent direct action to blockade roads, occupy spaces and disrupt "business as usual" for the nuclear and war makers of the US.

Affinity groups have a long and interesting past, owing much to the anarchists and workers of Spain and the anarchists and radicals today who use affinity groups, non-hierarchical structures, and consensus decision making in direct action and organising.

AFFINITY GROUP ROLES

There are many roles that one could possibly fill. They include:

Medical - An affinity group may want to have someone who is a trained street medic who can deal with any medical or health issues during the action.

Legal Observer - If there are not already legal observers for an action, it may be important to have people not involved in the action taking notes on police conduct and possible violations of activists rights.

Media - If you are doing an action which plans to draw media, a person in the affinity group could be empowered to talk to the media and act as a spokesperson.

Action Elf/Vibes-Watcher - This is someone who would help out with the general wellness of the group: water, massages, and encouragement through starting a song or cheer. This role is not a necessity, but may be particularly helpful in day long actions where people might get tired or irritable as the day wears on.

Traffic - If it is a moving affinity group, it may be necessary to have people who are empowered to stop cars at intersections and in general watch out for the safety of people on the streets from cars and other vehicles.

Arrestable Members - This depends on what kind of direct action you are doing. Some actions may require a certain number of people willing to get arrested, or some parts of an action may need a minimum number of arrestables. Either way, it is important to know who is doing the action and plans on getting arrested.

Jail Support - Again, this is only if you have an affinity group who has people getting arrested. This person has all the arrestees contact information and will go to the jail, talk to and work with lawyers, keep track of who got arrested etc.

HOW TO START AN AFFINITY GROUP

An affinity group could be a relationship that lasts for years among a group of friends and activists, or it could be a week long relationship based around a single action. Either way, it is important to join an affinity group that is best suited to you and your interests.

If you are forming an affinity group in your city or town, find friends or fellow activists who have similar issue interests, and thus would want to go to similar actions. Also, look for people who would be willing to use similar tactics - if you want to do relatively high risk lockdowns, someone who does not want to be in that situation may not want to be in the affinity group. That person could do media or medic work, but it may not be best if they are completely uncomfortable around certain tactics of direct action.

If you are looking to join an affinity group at a mass action, first find out what affinity groups open to new members and which ones are closed. For many people, affinity groups are based on trusting relationships based around years of friendship and work, thus they might not want people they don't know in their affinity group. Once you find which affinity groups are open, look for ones that have an issue interest or action tactic that you are drawn to, like a Free Tibet affinity group or a blockade affinity group.

WHAT AN AFFINITY GROUP CAN DO

Anything!!! They can be used for mass or smaller scale actions. Affinity groups can drop a banner, blockade a road, provide back-up for other affinity groups, do street theater, block traffic riding bikes, organize a tree sit, change the message on a massive billboard, play music in a radical marching band or sing in a revolutionary choir.

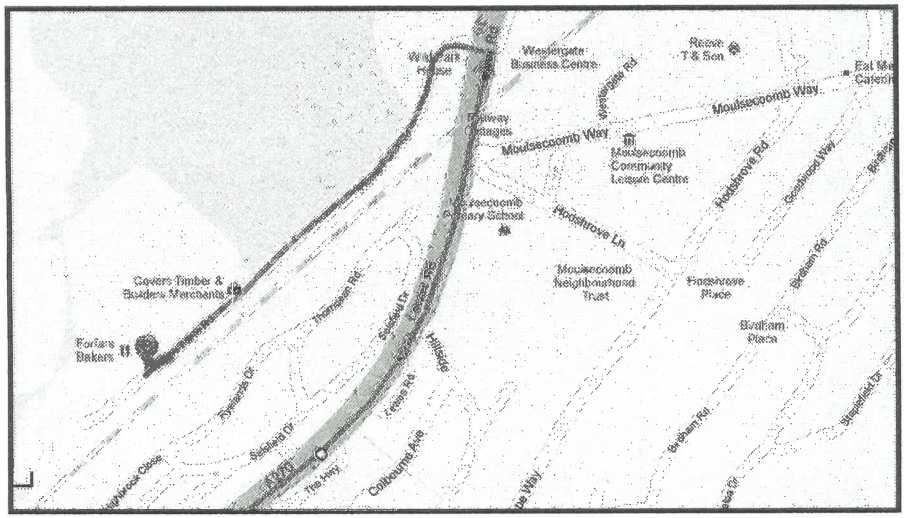
There can even be affinity groups who take on certain tasks in an action. For instance, there could be a roving affinity group made up of street medics, or an affinity group who brings food and water to people on the streets.

What makes affinity groups so effective for actions is that they can remain creative and independent and plan out their own action without an organisation or person dictating to them what can and can't be done. Thus, there are an endless amount of possibilities for what affinity groups can do. Be creative and remember: direct action gets the goods!

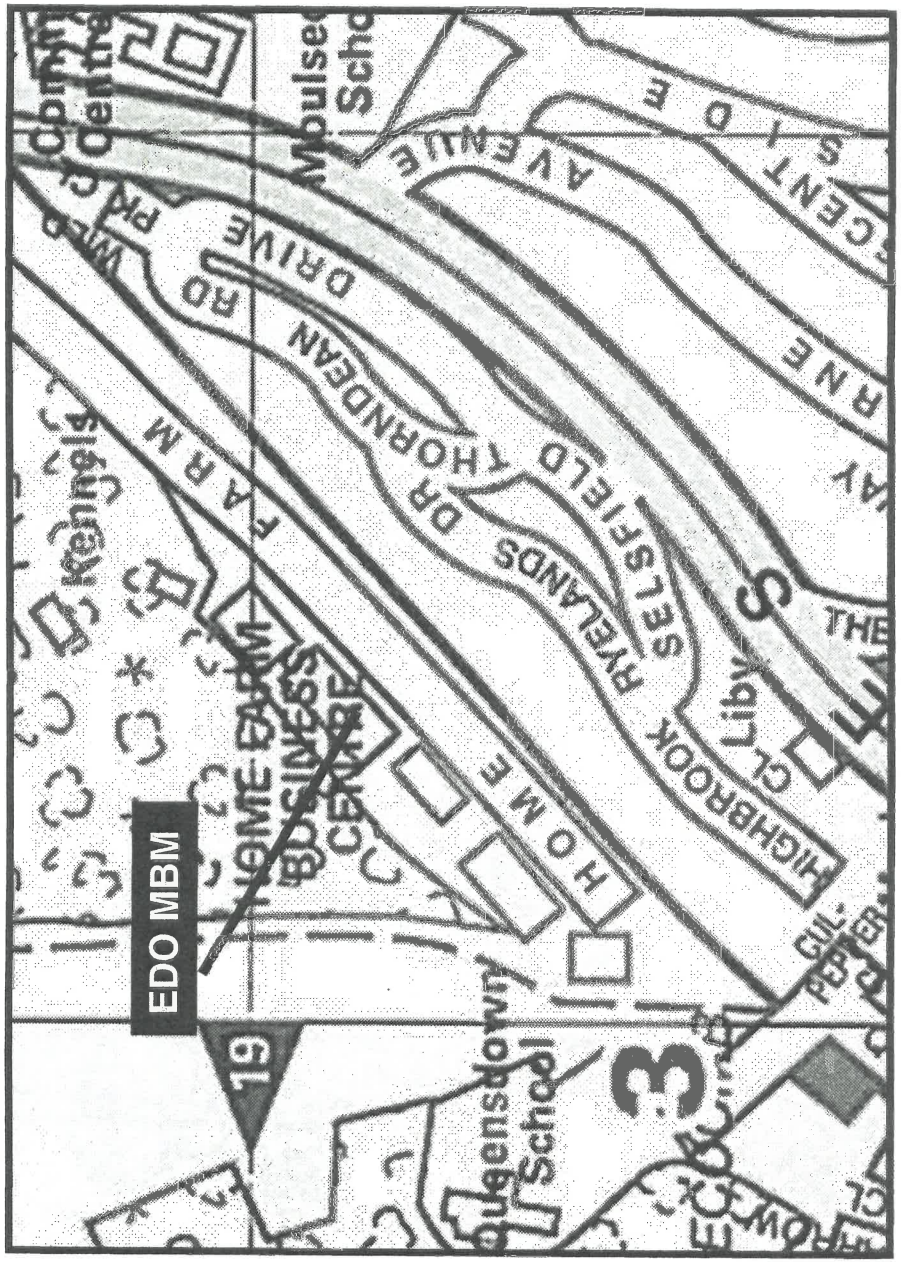
HOW TO FIND THE FACTORY

EDO/ITT is, if heading north from Molsecoomb Station, the fourth out of five warehouses on Home Farm Road. It's a large white and green building, which unfortunately looks quite similar to it's neighbours, particularly from behind.

The factory address is:
EDO MBM Technology Ltd
Emblem House
Home Farm Road
Brighton
BN1 9HU



If you are coming by bus or bike along Lewes Road then you need to turn left up Home Farm Road just before Wild Park.



THE SUMMER OF RESISTANCE EVENTS CALENDAR

The Summer of Resistance might be about you doing your own thing, but we thought we'd confirm some dates to get you going. Come along to the events below and get in touch with your own. Remember, it is up to you whether you want your event publicised or a secret.

Tuesday 1st May: come down to Brighton for a big noise demo outside the factory to get us started. Bring noise making equipment, banners, mega-phones, intruments and anything else you want to contribute.

Wednesday 2nd May: Bad Music noise demo - bring broken instruments and tone deaf playing abilities to make a racket. 4-6pm.

Thursday 3rd May: Phone blockade of EDO/ITT and Twitter prompting of EDO parent company @ITTexelis. The great thing about this one is that you can challenge EDO about their business wherever you are.

Sunday 6th May: Party in the Park, Brighton. Details TBA.

Wednesday 9th May: Bikes Not Bombs - critical mass cycle ride up to the factory. Bring peddle powered sound systems. Meet 3pm @ The Level.

Saturday 12th May: Target Barclays. Smash EDO will target Barclays, the market makers on the New York Stock Exchange for ITT Exelis, in North Street, Brighton. If you can't join us there, target Barclays where you are! If you want a flyer for your demo, we've got one ready - just get in touch!

Wednesday 16th May: Drown Out The Drones - noise demo highlighting the increasing use of drones in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Somalia and Yemen. Bring kazoo's for mass buzz. 4pm-6pm.

Wednesday 23rd May: Noise of War - noise demo showing EDO the sounds of death they help create across the world. 4pm-6pm.

Wednesday 30th May: Don't Attack Iran noise demo. 4pm-6pm.

Bank Holiday, Monday 4th June: Big Demo. March against the arms trade and attacks on Iran. Assemble 12pm @ Barclays, North St, Brighton.